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ABSTRACT

This review discusses the principal's role in collective negotiation in light of the increased acceptance of the right of teachers and their representatives to negotiate directly with the board rather than through the principal. The literature cited discusses the ambivalence of the principal's role in collective negotiation, describes the management team concept as a possible solution to the problem, and provides both information on legislation and guidelines applicable to the principal's role. (Author/JF)

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Principal's Role in Collective Negotiation

Ian Templeton

The recent trend toward increased negotiation in education has produced a number of critical problems demanding solution. One of these problems is defining the principal's role in negotiation. Generally speaking, this role has not been defined. Principals thus find themselves on the fence, coming under the fire of teacher groups as well as boards of education.

Edwards and Burnett (1970)

Since its advent in 1961, collective negotiation between teachers and boards of education has created confusion in the role of the principal—the man caught in the middle.

Traditionally, the principal has acted both as the representative of the board and the superintendent, and as the spokesman for the teachers before the superintendent and the board. With the increased acceptance of the right of the teachers and their chosen representatives to negotiate directly with the board, the principal's dual function has been challenged.

In the light of such role change and conflict, it is understandable that the principal's new function is not clear. Even in states with legislation covering membership in collective negotiation groups, the statutes frequently fail to define, or to define clearly, the place of the principal in the negotiation process.

The literature cited in this review discusses the ambivalence of the principal's role in collective negotiation, describes the management team concept as a possible solution to the problem, and provides information on legislation and guidelines applicable to the principal's role.

Of the documents reviewed, four are available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), two are available from the publishers, and eight appear in journals indexed in *Current Index to Journals in Education.* Complete instructions for ordering documents available from EDRS are given at the end of the review.

AMBIVALENCE OF PRINCIPAL'S ROLE

Urich (1970) reveals the conflicting expectations held concerning the principal's role in collective negotiation. He reports on a study that measured the amount of agreement among rural, urban, and central-city superintendents, principals, and teachers concerning the principal's role and the scope and structure of the negotiation process.

According to the study's findings, administrators desire to limit teacher organization involvement in the collective negotiation process and see the principal's role as that of the board of education's representative. Secondary school teachers believe in strong teacher association involvement and do not feel that the principal should be spokesman for the teacher organization as well as for the board. Elementary school teachers reject teacher organization militancy, consider the principal to be a member of the teacher organization, and look to him for leadership. Results indicate that the principal must formulate a role for himself at the collective negotiation table or be left out.

Conflict also characterizes the principal's attitude and performance in negotiation. Roberts (1970) describes a study that assessed the usefulness of Gross' theory of role-conflict resolution in predicting role choice by administrators who become involved in formal collective negotiation for the first time. Roberts concludes that (1) the Gross theory provides a useful framework for examining internal and external environmental factors, (2) the administrator role in negotiation will increasingly identify with board expectations as older and more experienced administrators retire or seek other responsibilities, and (3) role ambivalence characterizes study subjects. In essence, role performance is consistent with an emerging "managerial" concept of school administration, but role preference is identified with the more traditionally oriented "instructional leader" image of the administrator.

While further defining the ambivalence of the principal's situation, Whittier (1969) suggests one possible role the principal can help create. He says:

> . . .individuals who are not teachers or members of the superintendent's immediate team find themselves in a very uncomfortable position, without an effective power base. The establishment of their role in a satisfactory manner is a very real concern today. Some members feel that such individuals are basically teachers and while not currently

> assigned to full time teaching have such a commonality of interest through past service and present concern that they should belong to the teachers group. Many teachers, as well as other individuals, feel that supervisory and curriculum workers, together with principals and others who are not regularly in the classroom, are part of management and that such recognition need not diminish their concern for instruction nor inhibit their working with teachers.

Whittier feels that if these supervisory personnel are not included on the superintendent's immediate team, they can serve a useful purpose by uniting with representatives from the teachers' and the superintendent's teams in fact-finding committees to provide information at the negotiation table.

Edwards and Burnett (1970) stress the importance of the principal's role as the instructional leader in the school. Citing King, they present arguments for including the principal on the teachers' negotiation team, as outlined earlier by King*:

a) administrative and faculty concerns cannot rationally be separated
b) coercive measures are less likely to be used when the principal is allied with teachers
c) it strengthens the administrative function and at the same time democratizes the administrative process
d) involving principals assures that their major education concerns will be considered
e) teachers and principals are both agents of the board of education

Other writers see the pressures of collective negotiation pushing all administrators closer together. Shannon (1970) observes that all administrator roles are changing and that the principal is becoming less a feudal lord in his school and more a part of a management team. Shannon believes the principal is a central figure in collective negotiation, grievance procedures, and strikes, because he is the administrator who must work most closely with teachers after disputes are settled.

Underwood (1969) holds a similar view but notes a conflict. He cites National Education Association Research Division figures indicating that 72 percent of all the school districts in one survey report administrator salaries are attached to teacher salary schedules. He considers this a contradiction of the current management team approach that defines all administrators as parts of the superintendent's team. Underwood proposes that principals and all other administrators be paid on a separate administrative schedule. This should result in a highly committed and closely knit administrative staff that is financially as well as ideologically bound to management.

MANAGEMENT TEAM CONCEPT

In the past many principals questioned the professionalism of teacher collective negotiation. Today, according to Lieberman (1970), the issue is no longer whether middle management (principals, assistant principals, supervisors, and department chairmen with administrative functions such as hiring) supports collective negotiation for teachers. The issue is whether middle management, feeling bypassed in teacher-board negotiations, will conduct its own negotiations with

*James C. King, "New Directions for Collective Negotiation," *The National Elementary Principal*, 47 (September 1967), 43-47.

the board. Lieberman notes, however, that there are better methods of gaining recognition and that board negotiating teams usually include capable middle management people.

In a report on administrator interest in the management team concept, Anderson (1969) describes the issues as interpreted through the eyes of the principal, the superintendent, and the board of education.

He offers the principal three alternatives for regaining the role in policy determination he lost through direct teacher-board negotiations: (1) organize a separate bargaining group, (2) adopt an internal structure within the school system providing representation for all administrators, and (3) combine the above two alternatives.

If principals choose to negotiate, Anderson feels they should not be represented by the same group that speaks for the teachers. He sees promise in the management team concept as principals, superintendents, and boards realize their need for cooperative working relationships in negotiations with teachers.

In a later paper (1970), Anderson discusses the management team as a substitute for collective negotiation for principals. Recognizing that principals are aware of the great power and financial progress teachers gained through collective negotiation, he understands the appeal of such results to administrators. However, he believes that the limitations of collective negotiation produce long-term disadvantages to working relationships among administrators. Such effective working relationships are best served by a management team approach that produces greater job satisfaction.

In implementing a management concept, Anderson emphasizes two factors as crucial:

> (1) the acceptance by the superintendent of the desirability of involving all sub-administrators in administrative planning and in policy formulation; and (2) the adoption of a formal structure which assures a system of open communication with all administrators.

LEGISLATION AND GUIDELINES

A pamphlet by Ackerly and Johnson (1969) contains the National Association of Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) viewpoint on the following critical issues to be considered prior to drafting state negotiation legislation: (1) the role of the school principal in negotiation, (2) the preferred procedures for designation of the bargaining agent, (3) a statutory timetable for demands, (4) the criteria for negotiable items, (5) the procedures for negotiation, (6) the procedures for impasse resolution, and (7) the permissibility of strikes. The appendix includes a copy of Iowa Senate Bill 237 as an example of a negotiation bill that closely approaches the NASSP criteria for desirable negotiation legislation.

Nolte (1970) traces the status and scope of collective negotiation in public education from its origins to the present. Included is an extensive analysis of state collective negotiation statutes with specific consideration of the issue of separate negotiation groups for administrators and teachers.

Hatch (1969) presents guidelines for principals in collective negotiations with teachers and in administration of grievance procedures. He also advances ideas on what

laws providing for collective negotiation in public education should contain if the interests and welfare of all parties are to be protected. A model law is provided. The report develops a management team agreement that can serve as a model for informal and formal working relations between boards of education and administrators.

A collection of sixteen articles (NEA 1969) discusses the professional negotiation movement and its implications for principals. One aim is to provide principals with thoughtful guidelines and specific techniques useful in negotiations. Appendixes contain (1) a glossary of terms used in the analysis of negotiation, and (2) sample contracts—one between a school district and a teachers association, and the other between a city board of education and a city association of administrators and supervisors.

SUMMARY

The introduction of direct teacher-school board collective negotiation has confused the role of the principal in the negotiation process. Previously the chief representative of both the board and the teachers, the principal has become an optional participant in the new negotiations.

Often bypassed by superintendents and boards, as well as by teachers, principals had to choose (where legislative statutes permitted) to join either the teacher or the superintendent-board team. Although some principals prefer to define themselves as "instructional leaders" and include themselves with teachers, more often they are covered in the definition of management borrowed from labor bargaining.

The trend in the current literature is to accept the principal as a part of management and to view him in an active role on a management team.

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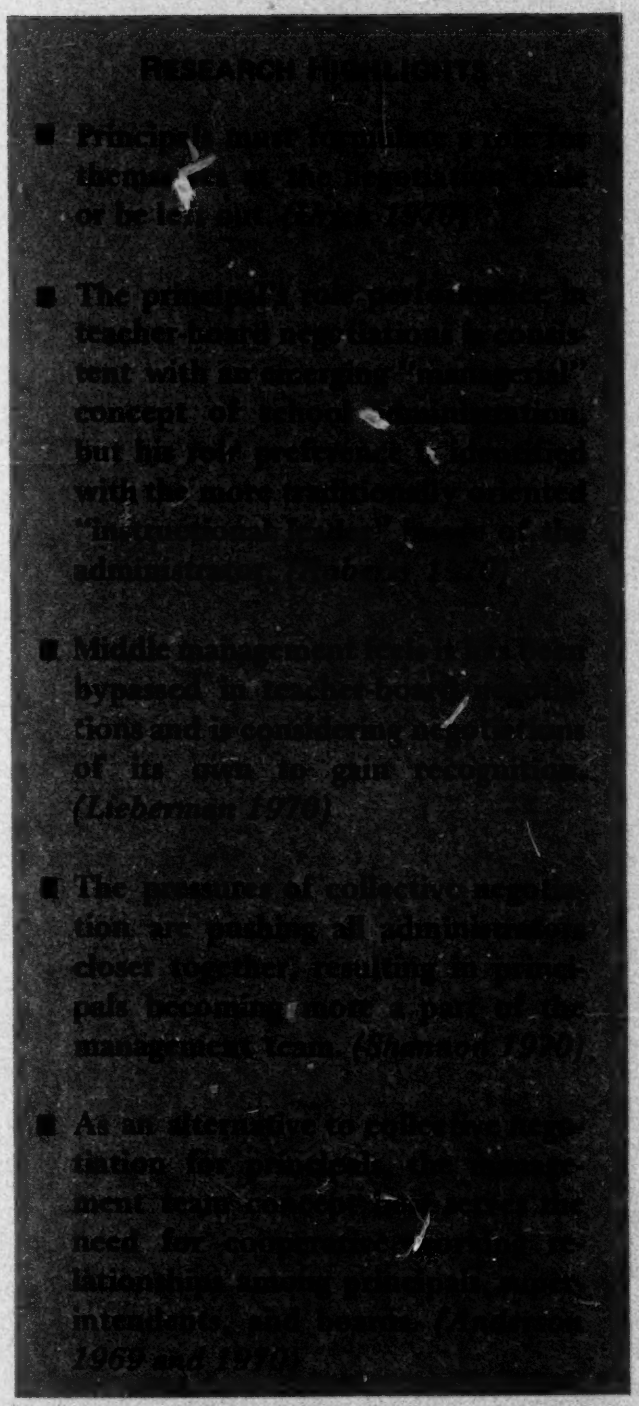

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